

Decision maker:	Cabinet member infrastructure
Decision date:	Friday, 8 March 2019
Title of report:	South Wye Transport Package - Active Travel Measures
Report by:	Head of Infrastructure Delivery

Classification

Open

Decision type

Key

This is a key decision because it is likely to result in the council incurring expenditure which is, or the making of savings which are, significant having regard to the council's budget for the service or function concerned. A threshold of £500,000 is regarded as significant.

This is a key decision because it is likely to be significant having regard to: the strategic nature of the decision; and / or whether the outcome will have an impact, for better or worse, on the amenity of the community or quality of service provided by the authority to a significant number of people living or working in the locality (two or more wards) affected.

Notice has been served in accordance with Part 3, Section 9 (Publicity in Connection with Key Decisions) of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012.

Wards affected

Belmont Rural; Central; Dinedor Hill; Greyfriars; Hinton & Hunderton; Newton Farm; Redhill; Saxon Gate; Stoney Street; Wormside;

Purpose and summary

A number of active travel options have been considered and consulted on in 2014 and 2016. A robust appraisal process outlined in this report has been adopted to determine the schemes which should be included in the scheme business case. If these schemes are not progressed the objectives of the SWTP will not be met.

The South Wye Transport Package comprises the Southern Link Road and a complementary package of active travel measures. The South Wye Transport Package Options Refinement Report

contained in Appendix 1 of this report describes the selection of this preferred package and outlines how a range of active travel measures has been considered, consulted upon publicly and refined according to feedback and technical appraisal of how well each of the schemes performed against package objectives. The report proposes which active travel elements should be included in business case for the scheme to ensure a robust case for funding can be made and confirms that other active travel measures will be considered for future delivery as other funding sources become available.

Recommendation(s)

That:

- (a) the preferred package of active travel measures as outlined in the current Options Refinement Report (in Appendix 1) be considered and approved by the cabinet member for infrastructure for inclusion in the South Wye Transport Package full business case within a budget of £5.041m;**
- (b) subject to confirmation of the statutory orders for the Southern Link Road, authority is delegated to the director of economy and place following consultation with the Section 151 officer to submit the final full business case to the Department for Transport to draw down Growth Fund grant funding for the delivery of the South Wye Transport Package, comprising the Southern Link Road and the active travel measures approved under recommendation (a);**
- (c) active travel measures not included in the appended Options Refinement Report preferred package be considered for future delivery as other funding sources become available through the annual plan process for the Public Realm.**

Alternative options

1. A number of active travel options have been considered and consulted on in 2014 and 2016. A robust appraisal process outlined in this report has been adopted to determine the schemes which should be included in the scheme business case. If schemes are not progressed the objectives of the SWTP will not be met.

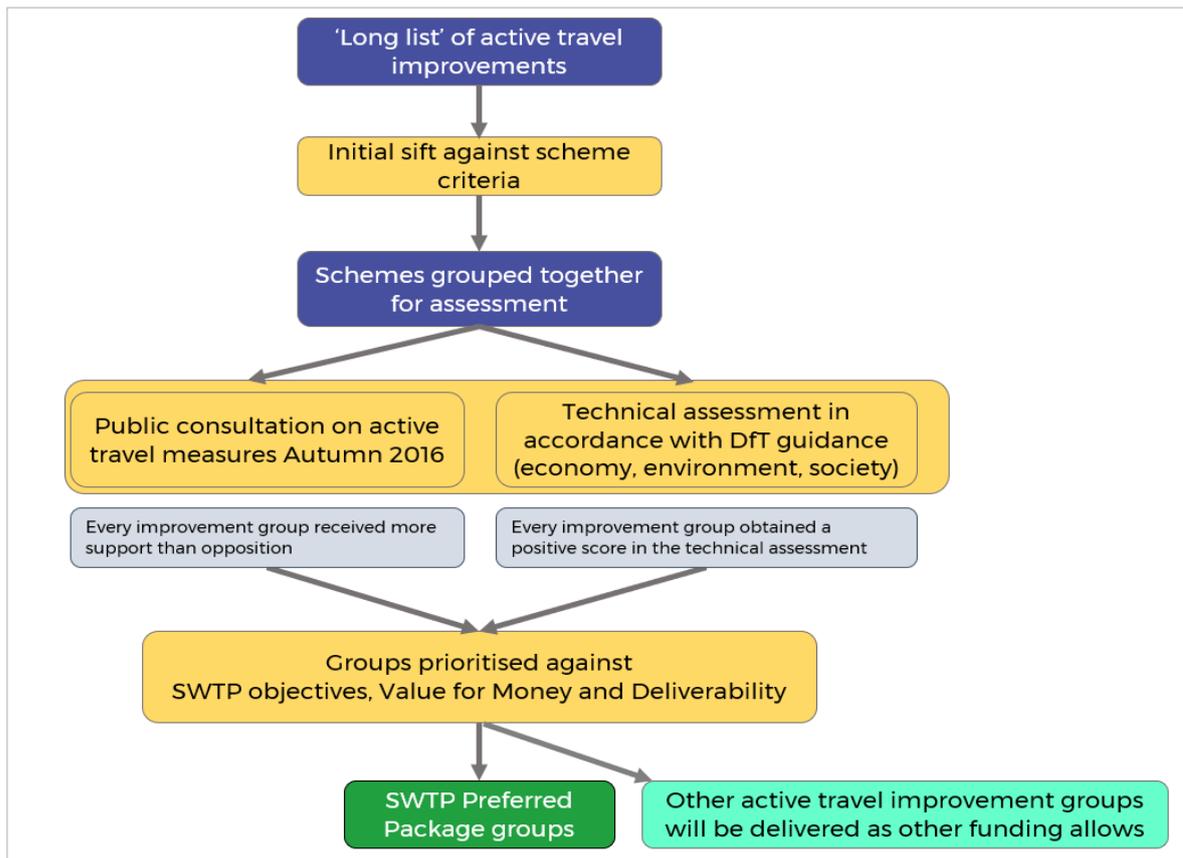
Key considerations

2. The aim of the South Wye Transport Package (SWTP) is to promote economic growth in Hereford while tackling specific problems in the South Wye area.
3. The SWTP will reduce congestion, enable access to the Hereford Enterprise Zone (HEZ), reduce growth in emissions and traffic noise, reduce accidents and encourage physical activity.
4. In December 2014 cabinet considered a report which set out a range of possible active travel schemes which could form the SWTP along with the new Southern Link Road (SLR). The report set out the results of consultation in 2014 and 2016 which confirmed strong support for active travel measures.
5. As a result of this support cabinet authorised further analysis and detailed design to confirm a preferred package for approval by the cabinet member for infrastructure.

6. The South Wye Transport Package Option Refinement Report sets out the selection of the SWTP package and outlines the process used to assess each of the possible active travel improvements to determine which should be included in the business case for the project along with the SLR.
7. As set out in the December 2014 cabinet report the following improvements have been considered:
 - a. 20 mph residential areas
 - b. Belmont Road bus priority measures
 - c. Belmont Road walking and cycling improvements
 - d. Belmont Road weight restriction
 - e. Belmont Road (West) walking and cycling improvements
 - f. Better walking and cycling routes to Hereford Enterprise Zone
 - g. Hoarwithy Road and Hinton Road walking and cycling links
 - h. Holme Lacy Road – further walking and cycling improvements
 - i. Walnut Tree Avenue / Hunderton Road traffic reduction
8. Given the level of support for all improvements cabinet delegated authority to undertake further analysis and technical work. This technical work is summarised in the Option Refinement Report in Appendix 1. This report sets out the selection of the SWTP package and assesses how each of the active travel projects considered contributes to the objectives of the SWTP, value for money and deliverability and refines the long list of projects to those which will best deliver benefits alongside the SLR to form the SWTP.
9. This Option Refinement Report (ORR) has been prepared to document the refinement of the preferred option for the SWTP. It forms part of the technical work being carried out to support the transport business case submission for funding approval, constituting the first element of *Option Development - Stage 2* of the Transport Appraisal Process, as set out in Department for Transport guidance. The use of an ORR to document this process was specifically agreed with the Department for Transport. The document demonstrates that the preferred SWTP is a package combining a Southern Link Road (SLR) with active travel measures.
10. The ORR provides the evidence which demonstrates the selection of SC2 as the preferred route for the SLR which was the subject of other governance reports so this is not covered in detail in this report.
11. This cabinet report will focus on the assessment of possible active travel measures to form the SWTP along with the SLR in the business case.
12. The ORR also sets out that possible active travel measures were identified from the analysis of problems in the south wye area, site visits, adopted policies and plans, and through discussion with authority officers. In line with Step 6 of the Option Development process, an initial sift was undertaken to exclude measures which did not meet the guidance criteria. This meant that only active travel schemes which could be funded by capital expenditure were taken forward.
13. Remaining active travel schemes were grouped for the purposes of assessment, with nine improvement groups taken forward for technical assessment. These nine improvement groups are set out in the ORR. A further three variants were assessed to ensure that

improvements could combine to create a coherent preferred package. The outcome of the 2016 public consultation on active travel schemes was also considered as part of the assessment.

14. Every improvement group obtained a positive score in the technical assessment and more support than opposition in the public consultation. A methodology was devised to enable the improvements to be prioritised, using three assessment criteria – alignment with South Wye area objectives, value for money and an assessment of the issues which may arise in delivering the scheme. A double weighting was accorded to the objectives score in view of the importance of implementing schemes which strongly achieve the objectives.
15. Applying this methodology identified active travel improvement groups **3A (Belmont Road walking and cycling improvements, including Toucan crossing near Walnut Tree Avenue)**, **6 (Better walking and cycling routes to Hereford Enterprise Zone)** and **8A (Holme Lacy Road further walking and cycling improvements)** received the highest overall scores. These are the schemes which would have the highest priority.
16. The total cost of the three groups of improvements was estimated to be £7.02m. This figure is a preliminary cost estimate which will be refined as the scheme detail is developed.
17. The process outlined in paragraphs 12 – 17 is summarised in the following diagram:



18. The preferred package of active travel improvements to be included in the SWTP business case with the SLR are summarised below:
 - Group 3A (Belmont Road walking and cycling improvements, including Toucan crossing near Walnut Tree Avenue and associated works) would transform the look, feel and use of a substantial section of Belmont Road, which has a key role in enabling more journeys to be made by active travel modes to access the HEZ, the

city centre and local facilities. This would provide connections to the key existing quality off-road route (Great Western Way) and extend the availability of quality off-road active travel infrastructure. The improved or new crossings along the length of the road would make it easier to cross and connect communities on either side of the road;

- Group 6A (Better walking and cycling routes to Hereford Enterprise Zone, without a shared use footway/cycleway under the railway bridge) would create a signed and waymarked 'quietway' cycle route from Newton Farm to the HEZ mainly using side roads. This would provide an alternative route to access employment areas, local facilities and schools; and
 - Group 8 (Holme Lacy Road – further walking and cycling improvements, with a shared use footway/cycleway under the railway bridge) would make east-west walking and cycling links easier, quieter and safer, linking homes to the employment areas at the HEZ.
19. The ORR sets out that these schemes will be effective in fulfilling the objectives of the SWTP because:
- Together they are considered to maximise the benefits of investments across the area;
 - They would constitute value for money;
 - The walking and cycling infrastructure would improve access to the HEZ, city centre and other local destinations, which will encourage uptake of these modes;
 - The walking and cycling infrastructure and reduced speed limits would contribute to a reduction in the severity and incidence of road collisions and would improve the perception of safety of active travel modes;
 - The uptake of walking and cycling would contribute to a reduction in traffic noise and reduce air pollutants associated with vehicle traffic and improve public health; and
 - They support many actions in the Living Streets Groundwork for the Hereford Walking Strategy document.
20. It is recommended that these schemes are included with the SLR as the SWTP in the business case to be submitted to DfT and that other schemes identified and supported in public consultations in 2014 and 2016 are considered for delivery when other funding opportunities become available through the Annual Plan process for Public Realm.

Community impact

21. The economic objectives of the South Wye Transport Package contribute to the council's corporate plan. The scheme seeks to contribute to the economic growth of the city and county as part of the overall economic vision.
22. The package of active travel measures has been refined following public consultations in 2014 and 2016. Consultation feedback has informed the development of the preferred package and will inform detailed design and delivery of the active travel schemes which will form the SWTP with the SLR.

Equality duty

- 23 Under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, the 'general duty' on public authorities is set out as follows:

A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to -

- (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
 - (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
 - (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
24. The Equality team have been consulted on this report; it is considered that there is no negative impact on the Protected Characteristics identified in the Equality Act 2010.
25. Consultation about the SWTP active travel measures has been wide ranging and sought to establish the needs of city users and residents including vulnerable users to inform the scheme design and delivery.
26. Respondents described themselves as male (50%), female (46%) with 4% preferring not to say. 12% of respondents described themselves as having a disability. Responses were not identified by gender or disability.

Resource implications

27. The estimated cost for the South Wye Transport package is set out in the Strategic Outline Business Case for the project as follows:

Package Element	Capital Cost £
A465 public realm scheme to reduce severance and encourage use of active modes	3,000,000
A465/A49 Southern link (including risk adjustment at 50%)	29,729,000
Cycling and walking schemes in Belmont	1,000,000
Cycling and walking schemes in Bullingham	1,000,000

28. On the basis of this there is an approved capital budget of £35m for the SWTP project; £27m of growth fund capital money has been secured for the SWTP with a local contribution of £8m from the council's transport budgets or other sources that may become available as the project progresses.
29. The ORR sets out an indicative cost for the three schemes to be included in the SWTP business case as £7.02m. These costs were based on indicative scheme designs and were appropriate for the purposes of comparison of all the active travel measures consulted upon. The detail of these three schemes has now been further developed and cost estimates

updated. The current estimated cost of these schemes is £5.041m. This will be set out in detail in the final full business case which will be submitted to DfT later this year.

30. Spend to the end of 2017/2018 on the SWTP project totals £4,977,931.67. Funding of £3,843,609.71 has been received to date from the Marches LEP growth fund. Drawdown of the remainder of the £27m grant will commence following the sign-off of the full business case by DfT. The council has funded £1,134,321.96 of capital costs to the end 2017/2018.
31. The remaining capital budget of £30,022,068.33 for the SWTP will be funded by £23,156,390.29 from the Marches LEP Growth Deal fund and £6, 865,678.04 from council budgets or any other successful external grant.
32. Spend in 2018/2019 is currently forecast as £1.995m. This will be funded from the council's local transport plan grant in advance of drawing down Marches LEP funding following sign off of the final full business case.
33. Spend in 2019/2020 is currently forecast as £11.564m. This forecast assumes confirmation of orders and award of contract following sign off of the final full business case by DfT. Spend in advance of the final full business case being signed off by DfT will be funded from the Local Transport Plan budget.

Legal implications

34. This is an Executive function under the Council's Constitution Part 3 Section 3 and is a key decision because it is likely to be significant having regard to the strategic nature of the decision; and/ or whether the outcome will have an impact, for better or worse, on the amenity of the community or quality of service provided by the authority to a significant number of people living or working in the locality (two or more wards in Herefordshire) affected. It is also likely to result in the council incurring expenditure which is, or the making or savings which are, significant having regard to the Council's budget for the service or function concerned. The leader has delegated this key decision to the Cabinet Member Infrastructure as it relates to their portfolio
35. The compulsory purchase order (CPO) was made on 5 March 2018 pursuant to the Acquisition of Land Act 1981 for the Southern Link Road (SLR) along with the side roads order pursuant to the Highways Act 1980, and following statutory objections to the CPO an inquiry was held in November 2018 by an Inspector on behalf of the Secretary of State. The outcome of whether the CPO will be confirmed with or without modifications, or if at all, is due to be released by the Secretary of State imminently.
36. As part of the CPO a range of active travel schemes which could form the SWTP have been proposed and consulted on along with the new SLR and this report lays out the selection of ATM for the SWTP package

Risk management

37. A detailed risk register has been developed for the scheme. Individual risks are identified as well as proposed mitigating actions, an owner and any cost associated agreed. Risk workshops are held on a regular basis to discuss and manage any risk if they occur.

Consultees

38. Throughout the development of the SWTP consultation on the scheme has taken place. This most recent consultation took place in autumn 2016 and feedback to this consultation was set out in the consultation report considered by cabinet in December 2017. Local members Cllr Summers, Cllr Chappell and Cllr McEvelly provided feedback at this time and this was set out in the decision report considered by cabinet in December 2017.
39. Further consultation will take place as the detailed design of these scheme progresses and Ward members input will form part of the development of active travel schemes in a ward.
40. All political groups were consulted about this report – no responses were received.

Appendices

Appendix A – SWTP Active Travel Measures – Option Refinement Report

Background papers

None